

REMARKS

Reconsideration is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 10, 13, 16, 20-21, 23 and 32-33 are amended. Claims 37-39 are new. Claims 12, 14, 17-19 and 35 are cancelled. Claims 10-11, 13, 15-16, 20-23, 25, 29-34 and 36-39 are pending.

I. New Claims

New claim 37 is a combination of prior claims 10 and 31. New claim 38 is similar to previously presented claim 25. New claim 39 is a combination of prior claims 16 and 36. Accordingly no new matter has been added.

II. Amendments

Currently amended claim 10 is a combination of prior claims 10, 12 and 14. Currently amended claim 16 is a combination of prior claims 16, 17, 18 and 19. Currently amended claim 20 is a combination of prior claims 20 and 35. Claims 21 and 23 have been amended to reflect the amendments made to claim 20. Claims 32 and 33 have been amended to reflect the amendments made to claim 16. Accordingly, no new matter has been added.

III. 102(b) Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 10, 12, 13, 15, 25, 29 and 30 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Hyde et al. (US 5,318,527). Applicant respectfully traverses in light of the currently amended claims.

Claim 10 has been amended to include the limitations of cancelled claims 12 and 14. The Examiner objected to claim 14 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. For at least these reasons, currently amended claim 1 is patentable over Hyde. Claims 13, 15, 25, 29 and 30 depend from claim 1 and are patentable along with claim 1 and need not be separately distinguished at this time.

Applicants do not concede the propriety of the rejections to claims 10, 12, 13, 15, 25, 29 and 30.

The Examiner also rejected claims 20-23 and 34 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Cawood (US 4,759,348). Applicant respectfully traverses in light of the currently amended claims.

Claim 20 has been amended to include the limitations of cancelled claim 35. The Examiner objected to claim 35 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. For at least these reasons, currently amended claim 20 is patentable over Cawood. Claims 21, 23 and 34 depend from claim 20 and are patentable along with claim 20 and need not be separately distinguished at this time.

Applicants note that claim 22 depends from claim 10. Claim 22 is patentable along with claim 10 for the reasons stated above and need not be separately distinguished at this time. Applicants do not concede the propriety of the rejection to claim 22.

IV. 103(a) Rejections

The Examiner rejected claim 11 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hyde. Claim 11 depends from claim 1 and is patentable along with claim 1 for the reasons stated above. Thus, claim 11 need not be separately distinguished at this time. Applicants do not concede the propriety of the rejection to claim 11.

The Examiner rejected claims 16-18 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ouchi (US 3,703,169). Applicant respectfully traverses in light of the currently amended claims.

Claim 16 has been amended to include the limitations of cancelled claims 17, 18 and 19. The Examiner objected to claim 19 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. For at least these reasons, currently amended claim 16 is patentable over Ouchi. Applicants do not concede the propriety of the rejections to claims 16-18.

The Examiner rejected claims 32 and 33 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ouchi in view of Whayne et al. (US 5,865,791). Claims 32 and 33

depend from claim 16 and are patentable along with claim 16 for the reasons stated above. Thus, claims 32 and 33 need not be separately distinguished at this time. Applicants do not concede the propriety of the rejection to claims 32 and 33.

V. Conclusion

In addition, an Information Disclosure Statement accompanies this Amendment and Response. Applicants note that the published applications of copending applications 10/105984, 10/105978 and 10/105907 have been cited, in addition to parent patent 6,488,689. Applicants request consideration of the Information Disclosure Statement and return of Form 1449 with the references initialed as being considered.

In view of the above, favorable reconsideration in the form of a notice of allowance is respectfully requested. Any questions regarding this communication can be directed to the undersigned attorney, James A. Larson, Reg. No. 40,443, at (612) 455-3805.

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